

NICKY Boo! Get on with the show. *(Everyone joins in booing)*

PROVOLONEY I love these audiences, the greatest in the world. I tell you, coming over here tonight I couldn't help but be reminded of the story of the Stewardess in from Cleveland. She arrives at ...

NICKY We heard that already. Bring on the girls. *(Everyone joins in)*

PROVOLONEY Rough house. Okay, you want entertainment, I'll give you entertainment with a capital E. There's nothing I like better than discovering young talent. And I ...

NICKY Where did they discover you? Under a rock? Get on with it.

PROVOLONEY *(Getting mad)* What I'm doing is laying the foundation for the evening at ...

NICKY You're laying an egg. *(Everyone laughs)*.

PROVOLONEY I've gotten big laughs from tougher crowds than you.

NICKY Before or after you dropped your pants? *(Everyone laughs)*

PROVOLONEY *(Furious)* That does it! I don't have to take this. Do your own stinkirt' show. *(Star Cat jingles Hip and soothes Provoloney's ego)*

STAR CAT Aw, c'mon, he's just joshing you. You're doing great. Go on. Guys, give him some support. *(They applaud)*

PROVOLONEY Well, if you insist. Without further ado *(Gives Nicky a dirty look)* please give a warm hand to a sister act that ends all sister acts. Straight from exotic Siam, the spectacular, the inseparable, Hester and Esther. Take it away girls.

Chick/et and Berdine enter in a wild red siamese twin costume joined at the lip

CHICKLET My name is Esther.

BERDINE My name is Hester.

DERDINECHICKLET *(In Unison)*

LIFE AIN'T ALWAYS A PIP
WHEN YOU'RE JOINED AT THE HIP.

IF JUST A SMALL BUMP
DOES STRANGE THINGS TO YOUR RUMP

AND A HOT STRIPPER'S GRIND REALLY
ACHES YOUR BEHIND,

BUT ENUF OF THIS KVETCHING, WE
STILL LOOK MOST FETCHING,

SO VO DE OH DO,
LETS GET ON WITH THE SHOW.

Chick/et and Berdine begin singing a song such as "The Lady in Red." In the middle of the song, Chick/et begins talking to herself. Berdine continues to sing.

CHICKLET Red ... red ... red dress. *(In Unison)* Take that off. You look like a whore. Take that dress off. *(Cries like a baby)* I'm angry. I'm angry. I don't like this. I can't move. Get me out. *(Berdine continues to sing nervously--Chicklet makes animal sounds)*

BERDINE Chicklet, please. "The Lady in Red," the fellas are crazy about the ...

CHICKLET *(Muttering)* Crazy, crazy, the fellas are crazy ... about ME! Me, Ann Bowman, live, onstage! *(Laughs raucously)* At last, in the spotlight.

BERDINE *(Nervously improvising)* Now Chick.let's going to do some impersonations for you. Who are you doing, Chick.let?

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* Get your hands off me, you blithering bull dyke.

BETTINA What's going on?

CHICKLET *(As Ami)* Silence! Now that I have your attention, I'd like to sing my song, my SOLO! *(Crooning)* More than the

greatest love the world has known ... *(A little girl)* Stop, I don't like your singing, you scare me. *(As Ann)* Shut up you little bitch! *(As Tylene)* Don't you be talking to that chile like that. *(As Ann)* Do not underestimate my fury, Tylene. *(As Tylene)* I ain't scared of you, mother. *(As Dr. Rose Mayer)* Excuse me, if I may interject. This is Dr. Rose Mayer speaking. If you have a personal grievance, by all means you are entitled to a fair hearing but let us not air out our dirty laundry in public. *(As Ann)* Butt out, you blabbering battleax. *(As Dr. Rose Mayer)* Once more I must interject. Ann, the question I ask of you is why? Why cause all this tsouris, this unhappiness. *(As Ann)* Enough! You insolent fools! I am taking over Chicklet's mind once and for all. Chicklet is officially dead!

BERDINE Stop it, stop it!

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* I warned you not to touch me. *(She starts to strangle Berdine. Star Cat and Kanaka try to separate them. Chick/et pulls out a straight razor and the chase is on. Chick/et is on the rampage chasing all the kids, dragging Berdine behind her.)* It's a shave and a haircut for all of you. How about white sidewalls, honey. *(She moves toward Bettina)* I'll get you anyway, Peewee.

BETTINA *(Holding her ponytail)* It's a fake! It's a switch! Help! Help! *(Star Cat and Kanaka subdue Chick/et. They pin her arms back and grab the razor. Berdine is in hysterics.)*

STAR CAT Let's get them out of that costume. *(They break away the siamese twin costume, freeing them. Bettina comforts Berdine)*

Mrs. Forrest enters

MRS. FORREST I thought I'd find her here. I'm going to have all of you arrested for kidnapping.

STAR CAT Mrs. Forrest, your daughter is mentally ill.

MRS. FORREST My little girl is as normal as I am.

CHICKLET *(In the voice of Tylene)* I gotta go back to work at the Safeway.

MRS. FORREST *(Near hysteria, grasping at straws)* She wants to be an actress. She's putting on a character. *(Breaks down)* She's not sick!

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* You 're so right, Mrs. Forrest, I am hardly the lunatic they are painting me to be. I am totally in control.

STAR CAT You are merely a delusion of Chicklet Forrest that enables her to express anger and rage.

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* Fancy phrases. And a big basket. I'd like to strap you on sometime.

STAR CAT That is highly unlikely since you are about to be obliterated.

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* Party pooper.

STAR CAT You don't frighten me. I'm flesh and blood. You're a psychological manifestation. I can conquer you.

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* There's no man alive strong enough to conquer me ... maybe Bob Hope.

STAR CAT I'm going to place you under hypnosis and through the technique of past regression get to the root of the trauma that fragmented Chicklet's personality.

MRS. FORREST I can't allow this. He doesn't know what he's doing.

PROVOLONEY He's had three semesters of psychiatric training.

STAR CAT Look into my eyes. I'm taking you back in time.

MRS. FORREST Someone stop this madness!

CHICKLET *(As Ann)* Oh shut your hole. Go on darling Doctor Star Cat.

STAR CAT I want to speak to Chicklet. Chick.let, are you there?

CHICKLET It's hard, I feel so far away, I can't ... *(She begins to sound like a radio with static)*

MRS. FORREST She's babbling. *(She exits)*

STAR CAT It's a bad connection. Chicklet, I know you are there. We are here to help you. Trust me. Are you there? *(Chick/et is sounding like a radio quickly switching stations)*

KANAKA *(Sincerely)* Maybe you should try her on FM.

STAR CAT Talk to us Chicklet, talk to us.

CHICKLET *(Static noises clearing as Dr. Rose)* ... I believe you will have greater success conversing with one of us.

STAR CAT Who am I talking to?

CHICKLET *(As Dr. Rose)* Dr. Rose Mayer, you're on the air.

STAR CAT Who exactly are you?

CHICKLET *(As Dr. Rose)* A radio personality, and a syndicated columnist.

PROVOLONEY This is weird, man, too weird.

CHICKLET *(As Dr. Rose)* I serve a very important function in Chicklet's life. Any situation that gets a little mishugga, that requires tact or diplomacy, I come in. In toto, I'm a people person.

STAR CAT And who is Tylene?

CHICKLET *(As Tylene)* I am her ambitious self. Come September first, I am attending night school where I can study keypunch and office management skills.

Suddenly Chick/et turns into Steve, an all American boy.

CHICKLET *(As Steve)* Whoa, can I just say something for a minute?

STAR CAT I believe we're meeting someone new. What's your name?

CHICKLET *(As Steve)* Steve.

STAR CAT Are you also a radio personality?

CHICKLET *(As Steve)* No. I'm a male model.

STAR CAT Describe yourself.

CHICKLET *(As Steve)* I'm a forty regular. *(Fidgety)* I'm very important to Chicklet. I'm her athletic self. I enjoy all sports, ice hockey, kayaking, golf, competition bowling. Of course I do try to be a well-rounded person. I love old romantic movies, snuggling up by a fire. I guess what I look most for in a girl are great legs and a sense of herself. *(He winks at Bettina, who gasps)*

STAR CAT Are there any more of you?

CHICKLET *(As Steve)* Gosh, let's see, there's a veterinarian, a couple singers, a reformed rabbi, a lighting designer, the accounting firm of Edelman and Edelman, a podiatrist ... *(As Chick/et)* Help me.

STAR CAT Chicklet, is that you?

CHICKLET *(As a little girl)* Uh huh. *(She sings)* "IT'S RAINING, IT'S POURING ... "

STAR CAT How old are you?

CHICKLET Eight. Seven and a

half. STAR CAT Where are you?

CHICKLET In a room, Mama calls it the hotel. There's a playground across the street. My brother Frankie and me like to go on the swings.

BERDINE She doesn't have a brother.

CHICKLET I do too have a brother. He's seven and a half.

YO YO Twins.

CHICKLET Mama says we can't go on the swings alone. She says it's too dangerous. Mama's going to take us to the movies today. She says she's gonna ...

Mrs. Forrest appears in a strange light, she is in the past, dressed in a red dress like a sexy young whore in the 1940's

MRS. FORREST *(Gently)* Baby, I'm so sorry. We're gonna have to go to the movies another day. Mama's gotta work. Fellas, come on in. These are my twins, ain't they cute?

CHICKLET But you promised you'd take us to the movies.

MRS. FORREST Well, I'm sorry. What do you want from my life? You wanna eat, don'tcha? Anyways, we gotta do our bit for the boys who go overseas. These guys are in the Navy and your Mama is making sure they are very well entertained. *(She giggles. To the children)* Now darlings, go outside and play. I'll meet you in the playground in an hour.

CHICKLET You're not fair.

MRS. FORREST Florence, I don't want anymore lip. Take Frankie and go outside and play. And don't you go near those swings. *(She turns to the sailors)* Sorry guys, being a Mom ain't easy. Now what was your name again, good looking? Please to meetcha, Johnny. Just call me Ann. Ann Bowman. *(She exits)*

CHICKLET *(In her normal voice)* I was so angry. I wanted to hurt her. I took Frankie's hand and we crossed the street to the playground. There were these awful slum children playing, pounding strange primitive instruments. A sharp breeze caused the wild flowers to have the wizened faces of starving circus clowns. The sky seemed so threatening, as if the clouds were created of demented angels warning me to flee. But I couldn't. I can't. Don't make me go on. Please.

STAR CAT You must. What happened next?

CHICKLET I look down and there's a pale green snake slithering along the crack of the pavement, a coolly seductive creature on its way to a lizard ball. This veridian temptress stops to deliver me a message. A perverse billet-doux that I must disobey my mother. No, no, I can't do that. I love my mother. She's kind

and beautiful. The snakes multiply, in a moment, there are reptiles covering the jungle gym making those steel bars as green as grass and terrifyingly alive. And all of them whispering "Go on, go on, go on the swings. Your mother doesn't love you. She loathes the very sight of you." I looked at my little brother, wearing his red overalls with the little fishes. I said, "Frankie, let's go on the swings. It'll be fun. I don't care what Mama said." He got on the swing and I pushed him. Harder and harder I pushed him until he was soaring into the clouds and that's when I dared him. I dared him, "I bet you can't stay on with no hands." He took me up on the bet and let go, and my wonderful little twin brother, this adorable little boy who loved and trusted me, he flew off the swing and into the outstretched arms of those ghastly angels and I never saw him again until we found his crushed, little body in the dumpster next door!

She dissolves into tears, Star Cat holds her. Mrs. Forrest appears again as she is today.

MRS. FORREST *(Devastated)* It's all true. All of it true. I was so ashamed. I blamed myself for the death of my boy. But I always loved my little girl. *(To Chick/et)* You must believe that. I did love you. I do. And when Chicklet lost her memory of that day, I took it as a blessing from God. I vowed to create a new life for us. I changed my name, moved to a new city. I suppose I tried too hard, went too far and now ... now I see I'm doomed to failure.

CHICKLET Mother, hold me. *(They embrace)*

BERDINE *(Sobbing)* I was supposed to be her best friend but I never knew.

KANAKA How do you feel, Chicklet?

CHICKLET As if a thousand doors have been opened.

PROVOLONEY But what does this all mean?

STAR CAT It's really very simple. Chicklet did her best to suppress this traumatic childhood episode by denying herself all normal

human emotion, so she created various alter egos to express emotion for her. She associated the sex drive with her mother, so she in effect became her childhood vision of her mother, Ann Bowman, whenever placed in a potentially erotic situation.

KANAKA Is this condition contagious?

STAR CAT Indeed not. Over eighteen percent of all Americans suffer from some form of multiple personality disorder. It is not communicable and in most cases, treatable with medical care.

BETTINA (*Energetically*) This is the most exciting stmy I've ever heard. This is the project that's going to win me an Oscar.

PROVOLONEY Huh?

BETTINA A surfer girl with a split personality. A prestige picture if I ever saw one. (*To Chicklet*) Honey, I want to option this property, and believe me I'll pay top dollar. I can't promise casting approval but you can trust my integrity.

MRS. FORREST I don't know. This is an invasion of ...

CHICKLET Mother, this is important. I want the public to know what it's like to suffer from a multiple personality disorder. And Berdine, will she be in the picture? She's vely important, you know.

BETTINA Oh, sure, sure, a character part.

STAR CAT But Bettina, do you really think you're ready to interpret such a complex role?

BETTINA (*With artistic intensity*) I don't think, I feel. I know this girl. I feel her torment. I am Chicklet! (*Suddenly switching to her practical show business nature*) Yo Yo and Provoloney, I'm taking you to New York with me as technical consultants on the Malibu scene.

YO YO Wow, New York!

PROVOLONEY The Philharmonic!

YO YO The New York City Ballet!

PROVOLONEY Balanchine!

YO YO The Frick! Provoloney, should we tell them about us?

PROVOLONEY Yeah, since this is the time for truth telling. Yo Yo and I are lovers. (*Everyone gasps*)

YO YO Yes, and we're proud of it. I've read all about the persecution of homosexuals, how in big cities, bars are raided and innocent people arrested, their lives ruined. But someday, someday we're going to fight back and the laws will be changed, and our brothers and sisters will march down the main streets of America shouting that we are proud to be who we are!

PROVOLONEY Oh, Yo Yo, I really love you. (*They embrace. The crowd sighs in sympathy.*)

BETTINA Come on everybody, let's move this party to my place. I've got the best record collection in town. (*They all hoot and holler and exit except for Berdine*)

BERDINE (*Alone onstage, holding the siamese twin costume*) Life sure is wacky. Here Chicklet and I were best friends and I never really knew her. If I don't know *her*, can I ever truly know anyone? Star Cat thinks science can tell us everything, and Bettina says if she feels things, they're true. Oh, sweet, lonely Schopenhauer and crazy ole Nietzsche and dear, committed Jean-Paul, all of you searching and never settling for an easy answer to life's eternal puzzlement. I hereby vow to carry on your never-ending quest. I know now that my true calling is to be a novelist and devote my life to exploring the fathomless possibilities of the human comedy. Hey, wait for Berdine! (*She nms off*)

BLACKOUT